Subject: gun inscription lettering

Block, Hortense Ellen

[Merrick, L.I., NY]

1932

HORTENSE ELLEN BLOCK
MERRICK GABLES
MERRICK, L. I.

March 9, 1932

Dear Mr. Newell:

Mr. Ludlow Bull, Associate Curator of Egyptian Art, of the Metrpolitan Museum advised me to write to you, in hopes that you might be able to help me in the following matter.

My family has in it's possession a gun presumably of the 18th century, of North African make, with a Spanish lock. It is adorned with a stagger design. The gun is over four feet in length, and equipped with a flintlock. On the barrel is an inscription, a plaster cast of which I am enclosing. It is this inscription that I have been trying to find the meaning of for over a year.

Mr. Bull said that you were in the habit of dealing with difficult scripts,

and that you might be able to help me in this matter.

The nob on the cast points to the muzzle of the gun.

Anything that you can do to help me in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

I hope that this will in no way inconvenience you, and I thank you for your courtesy.

Sincerely,

Hortense Ellen Block

Enclosure under separate cover.

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March 15, 1932.

Miss Hortense Ellen Block
Merrick Gables
Merrick, L. I.

Dear Miss Block:

Your letter to Mr. Newell has been turned over to me for reply. Both Mr. Newell and I have studied your plaster impression taken from a gun lock. Neither of us can make anything out of it. Our conclusion is that it is a Moorish copy of some European inscription in which they failed utterly to make a true copy. The letters that do show are certainly not any North African alphabet while several of the characters certainly appear to have been ignorant imitations of certain European letters. One would almost imagine the two end characters would look like a "29" or "62". Neither of us is at all familiar with gun markings and would advise you to try to get some gun expert to help you out. We do not know who to refer you to.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator